REMARKS

Claims 1 through 20 are in the application, with Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 12, 14, 15, 19 and 20 having been amended. Claims 1, 12 and 19 are the independent claims herein. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 1 through 11 were rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112 for alleged indefiniteness. Although the propriety of the rejection is not conceded, the phrase "a second contact of substantially the first length" has been deleted from Claim 1 and replaced with "a second contact of a second length". Moreover, Claim 1 has been amended to specify that the claimed first length and the aforementioned second length "are substantially equal". Claims 3 and 6 have been similarly amended to address the concerns raised in the §112 rejection.

Applicants submit that the foregoing amendments further clarify the relationships between the claimed first length and second length (Claim 1) and between the claimed third length and fourth length (Claims 3 and 6). Accordingly, withdrawal of the outstanding rejection under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 102(b)

Claims 1 through 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,116,917 ("Choy"). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claim 1

Amended independent Claim 1 relates to a device that includes a base having a lower surface and a receptacle coupled to the base, the receptacle defining an opening to receive an electrical module, and the received electrical module to form an acute angle with the lower surface. The device further includes a first contact (e.g., contact 30 of FIG. 1) of a first length protruding from the base and protruding from the receptacle into the opening, and a second contact (e.g., contact 40 of FIG. 1) of a second length, the second contact adjacent to the first contact, and the second contact protruding from the base and protruding from the receptacle into

the opening. The first length and the second length are substantially equal. As described at least on page 3, lines 19 through 23, some embodiments of the foregoing may reduce signal skew of signals carried by the first contact and the second contact.

Choy is not seen to disclose or to suggest the foregoing features of Claim 1. Specifically, Choy is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least a first contact of a first length and a second contact of a second length adjacent to the first contact, where the first length and the second length are substantially equal. Rather, Choy describes contacts 16 disposed on two sides of central slot 14. FIG. 5 shows a first pair of adjacent contacts 16 disposed on one side of central slot 14, and a second pair of adjacent contacts 16 disposed on a second side of central slot 14. Contacts 16 are intended to carry signals from PC board 100 to a corresponding circuit pad of a card disposed in central slot 14.

Attachment A hereto is a marked-up version of FIG. 5 in which contacts 16 of the first pair are labeled "W" and "X", and in which contacts 16 of the second pair are labeled "Y" and "Z". It is clear from FIG. 5 (and from FIG. 4) that a length of contact W is different from a length of adjacent contact X, and that a length of contact Y is different from a length of adjacent contact Z. As a result of the foregoing arrangement, a signal entering contact W will travel farther to reach its corresponding circuit pad than a signal entering adjacent contact X will travel to reach its corresponding circuit pad. The difference in travel distance may create signal skew between the signals.

Accordingly, Choy is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least a first contact of a first length and a second contact of a second length adjacent to the first contact, where the first length and the second length are substantially equal. Claim 1 and its dependent Claims 2 through 11 are therefore believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 12 and 19

Amended independent Claim 12 concerns a device that includes a connector to hold an electrical module at an acute angle with respect to a surface on which the connector is to be mounted, a first contact having a first portion to contact the surface and a second portion of the first contact to contact the electrical module, and a second contact adjacent to the first contact. A

first portion of the second contact is to contact the surface and a second portion of the second contact is to contact the electrical module. In addition, a distance between the first portion of the first contact and the second portion of the first contact is substantially equal to a distance between the first portion of the second contact and the second portion of the second contact.

Nowhere does Choy even mention a distance between a portion of a contact that is to contact a mounting surface and a portion of the contact that is to contact an electrical module. Consequently, Choy also fails to mention (or to illustrate) that such a distance may be substantially equal to a corresponding distance of an adjacent contact. Returning to Attachment A, it is clear that the distance between a portion of contact W that is to contact a mounting surface ("W1") and a portion of contact W that is to contact an electrical module ("W2") is quite different from the distance between a portion of contact X that is to contact the mounting surface ("X1") and a portion of contact X that is to contact the electrical module ("X2"). Similarly, a portion of contact Y that is to contact the mounting surface ("Y1") and a portion of contact Y that is to contact the electrical module ("Y2") is not substantially identical to the distance between a portion of contact Z that is to contact the mounting surface ("Z1") and a portion of contact Z that is to contact the electrical module ("Z2"). The differences between these distances may create signal skew between signals that are carried by adjacent contacts.

Amended independent Claim 12 and dependent Claims 13 through 18 are therefore believed to be allowable. Amended independent Claim 19 concerns a system including features similar to those of Claim 12 and is believed to be in condition for allowance for at least those reasons given with respect to Claim 12. Claim 20, which depends from Claim 19, is therefore also believed to be allowable.

CONCLUSION

The outstanding Office Action presents a number of characterizations regarding the applied reference, some of which are not directly addressed herein because they are not related to the rejections of the independent claims. Applicants do not necessarily agree with the characterizations and reserve the right to further discuss those characterizations.

For at least the reasons given above, it is submitted that the entire application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience. Alternatively, if there remains any question regarding the present application or any of the cited references, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions for expediting allowance of the present application, the Examiner is cordially requested to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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Attachment: Marked-up version of FIG. 5 of U.S. Patent No. 6,116,917